

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 03815 251553Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----130693 251602Z /41

O 251515Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7429
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2828
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAPETOWN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 3815

EXDIS

E.9. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, RH, US, UK
SUBJECT: FRONTLINE TALKS IN LAGOS DURING CARTER VISIT

REF: STATE 075851

SUMMARY: MINISTERIAL-LEVEL RHODESIAN TALKS IN LAGOS DURING
PRESIDENT CARTER'S VISIT ARE STILL PROBLEMATIC. RESULTS
OF THIS WEEKEND'S FRONTLINE TALKS IN DAR ES SALAAM MAY
SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT EXTENT TO WHICH GARBA'S PROPOSAL
REMAINS ATTRACTIVE TO VARIOUS INVITEES. FMG DOES NOT
INTEND INVITE BRITISH. WE HAVE PRESENTED TO FMG OUR
CONCERNS ABOUT SECRETARY VANCE'S PARTICIPATION IN DETAILED
DISCUSSIONS IN LAGOS WITHOUT BRITISH INCLUSION. FMG
LOOKS FORWARD DISCUSSING THESE AND OTHER MATTERS WITH
ANDY YOUNG MID-WEEK. END SYMMARY.
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PAGE 02 LAGOS 03815 251553Z

1. GARBA HAS BEEN OUT OF TOWN SINCE THURSDAY NIGHT,
SPENDING EASTER VACATION WITH HIS FAMILY IN PLATEAU STATE.
HE IS NOT EXPECTED BACK IN LAGOS UNTIL SOMETIME TUESDAY
MARCH 28. MINISTRY EXTERNAL AFFAIRS VIRTUALLY SHUT DOWN
FOR FOUR-DAY EASTER HOLIDAY. THUS VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE
FOR US TO OBTAIN THE KIND OF INFORMATION WE ALL NEED ON

STATUS OF FRONTLINE DISCUSSIONS ON RHODESIA PROPOSED TO BE HELD IN LAGOS DURING PRESIDENT CARTER'S VISIT MARCH 31-APRIL 3.

2. AS GENTLY BUT EXPLICITLY AS POSSIBLE, WE ALL NEED ON STATUS OF FRONTLINE DISCUSSIONS ON RHODESIA PROPOSED TO BE HELD IN LAGOS DURING PRESIDENT CARTER'S VISIT MARCH 31-APRIL 3.

2.AS GENTLY BUT EXPLICITLY AS POSSIBLE, WE HAVE EXPLAINED TO AMBASSADORS AKADIRI AND MUSA OUR POSTURE REGARDING SECRETARY VANCE'S PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED DISCUSSIONS. THEY WILL INFORM GARBA AS SOON AS HE MAKES CONTACT AGAIN WITH LAGOS. THE FMG HAS MADE NO RPT NO APPROACH TO THE BRITISH CONCERNING BRITISH PARTICIPATION IN THE TALKS, AND IT IS CLEAR THAT THERE IS AT PRESENT NO RPT NO INTENTION OF DOING SO.

3. AKADIRI TOLD ME THI S MORNING THAT THERE IS STILL NO PRECISE INFORMATION ON WHO WILL ACCEPT THE FMG INVITATION. HE SAYS HIS MINISTRY DOESN'T EXPECT TO HAVE SUCH INFORMATION UNTIL MID NEXT WEEK. HE THOUGHT MKAPA WOULD COME PROVIDED IT WERE CLEAR THAT "SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS" WITH MR. VANCE WOULD ENSURE. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF US CONCERN ABOUT DETAILED TALKS WERE BROUGHT TO NYERERE'S ATTENTION, AKADIRI THOUGHT NYERERE MIGHT REFUSE TO PERMIT NKAPA
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PAGE 03 LAGOS 03815 251553Z

TO PARTICIPATE. MOGWE AND MWALE WOULD PROBABLY COME REGARDLESS. JORGE WAS A FIFTY-FIFTY CHANCE, WHEREAS CHISSANO WAS A COMPLETE QUESTION-MARK. WHEN I TOLD AKADIRI I UNDERSTOOD NETO WAS "IN SECLUSION" ON DOCTOR'S ORDERS, AKADIRI AGREED THIS MIGHT REDUCE SOMEWHAT THE POSSIBILITY OF JORGE'S PARTICIPATION.

4. I HAVE A HUNCH THIS MEETING MAY WASH OUT ALTOGETHER. IF WE WANT IT TO WASH OUT, WE COULD NUDGE IN THAT DIRECTION. CONVERSELY OUR SUPPORT OF THE MEETING WOULD HELP ASSURE THAT IT HAPPENS. ANDY YOUNG AND I WILL SURELY BE SEEING GARBA TUESDAY EVENING OR IN THE COURSE OF WEDNESDAY. THIS WOULD PROVIDE THE OCCASION FOR SUGGESTION WE MIGHT WISH TO MAKE IN EITHER DIRECTION. THE RESULTS OF THE FRONTLINE MEETINGS TH IS WEEKEND IN DAR ES SALAAM, AND ANDY'S PARTICIPATION IN THEM, SHOULD PRESUMABLY BE SIGNIFICANT FACTORS IN THE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE LAGOS MEETING ON THE PART OF THE VARIOUS PUTATIVE PARTICIPANTS.

5. ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING ON RHODESIA DOES INDEED TAKE PLACE, WE FORESEE POSSIBLE

SCHEDULE CONFLICT PROBLEMS AFFECTING OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE BILATERAL ECONOMIC DISCUSSION WITH GENERAL OBASANJO BEGINNING AT 1030 SUNDAY MORNING. THE FMG IS CURRENTLY PLANNING ON STARTING THE RHODESIAN TALKS AT 8 AM. EVEN THOUGH THE FMG HAS TOLD US THE TALKS SHOULD LAST "ONLY TWO OR THREE HOURS" (LAGOS 3767), IT APPEARS QUITE LIKELY THAT THE MEETING WILL NOT HAVE CONCLUDED BY THE TIME THE ECONOMIC BILATERAL BEGINS AT 1030. IN THAT EVENT SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE US TEAM WHO MIGHT BE IN THE RHODESIAN TALKS WOULD HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER TO LEAVE THEM EARLY IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ECONOMIC BILATERAL. WE HAVE REVIEWED THE POSSIBLE OPTIONS FOR REARRANGING SCHEDULES TO AVOID THIS OVERLAP. THE SIMPLEST ALTERNATIVE WOULD APPEAR TO BE TO SUGGEST TO THE FMG THAT THEY MOVE THE RHODESIAN TALKS FROM
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PAGE 04 LAGOS 03815 251553Z

SUNDAY MORNING TO SUNDAY AFTERNOON. THEY WOULD THEN CONFLICT ONLY WITH THE VISIT TO THE PORT FACILITIES AT TIN CAN ISLAND.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, VISITS, CHIEFS OF STATE MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LAGOS03815
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780132-0221
Format: TEL
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780325/aaaaauwt.tel
Line Count: 139
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9cacadbd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 STATE 75851
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3203786
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRONTLINE TALKS IN LAGOS DURING CARTER VISIT
TAGS: PDEV, RH, US, UK, NI, (GARBA, JOSEPH N)
To: STATE DAR ES SALAAM
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9cacadbd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014